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# Rules for Visitors to the National Forests



United States  
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## Rules for Visitors to the National Forests

WELCOME TO YOUR NATIONAL FORESTS! As a visitor to the National Forests, you are asked to follow certain rules designed to protect the Forests and the natural environment, to ensure the health and safety of visitors, and to promote pleasant and rewarding outdoor recreation experiences for all visitors. Forest Officers are empowered to enforce the Federal Regulations that the rules listed in this brochure are taken from. Please take time to read and understand them.

Regional Foresters and Forest Supervisors may issue orders that will close or restrict the use of certain areas if the need arises. Such orders will be posted so that visitors to the National Forest can reasonably be expected to be familiar with them. Copies of the orders will also be available in the offices of Forest Supervisors and District Rangers.

Information on all permit requirements is available from Forest Service offices. If you have any questions or need help, please contact your nearest Forest Officer or visit the nearest Forest Service Office.

Please remember to be careful! You are primarily responsible for your own safety. Look out for natural hazards and dangers when you are in the forest. If you hike off trails or swim or dive in streams or lakes, you do so at YOUR OWN RISK.



*All visitors and users of the National Forests are subject to Federal Regulations. The points of conduct listed in this brochure are generally included in and enforceable through Federal Regulations. All of the regulations are published in Title 36 of the Code of Federal Regulations and are on file at all Forest Supervisor and District Ranger offices. Violation of orders and regulations is subject to punishment by a fine or imprisonment.*

*Authority: 16 USC 551, 7 USC 1011(f).*

*State traffic and game laws apply to National Forests unless otherwise specified.*

## **Sanitation**

- Throw all garbage and litter in containers provided for this purpose, or take it with you.
- Garbage containers, when provided, are reserved for the use of visitors to the National Forest, not visitors to or owners of private lands or lands under permit.
- Wash food and personal items away from drinking water supplies. Use water faucets only for drawing water.
- Prevent pollution—keep garbage, litter, and foreign substances out of lakes, streams, and other water.
- Use toilets properly. Do not throw garbage, litter, fish cleanings, or other foreign substances in toilets and plumbing fixtures.

## **Operation of Vehicles**

- Obey all traffic signs. State traffic laws apply to the National Forests unless otherwise specified.
- When operating vehicles of any kind, do not damage the land or vegetation or disturb wildlife. Avoid driving on unpaved roads or trails when they are wet or muddy.
- Within campgrounds and other recreation sites, use cars, motorbikes, motorcycles, or other motor vehicles only for entering or leaving, unless areas or trails are specifically marked for them. Park only in marked parking areas.
- Do not block, restrict, or interfere with the use of roads or trails.
- Obey area and trail restrictions on use of trail bikes and other off-the-road vehicles.

## **Property**

- Do not carve, chop, cut, or damage any live trees.
- Preserve and protect your National Forests. Leave natural areas the way you find them.

- Enter buildings, structures, or enclosed areas in National Forests only when they are expressly opened to the public.
- Indian sites, old cabins, and other structures, along with objects and artifacts associated with them, have historic or archeological value. Do not damage or remove any such historic or archeological resource.

## **Campfires**

- Obey restrictions on fires. Fires may be limited or prohibited at certain times.
- Within campgrounds and other recreation sites, build fires only in fire rings, stoves, grills, or fireplaces provided for that purpose.
- Be sure your fire is completely extinguished before leaving. **YOU ARE RESPONSIBLE FOR KEEPING FIRES UNDER CONTROL.**

## **Camping**

- Use picnic sites, swimming beaches, and other day use areas only between the hours of 6 a.m. and 10 p.m.
- Campgrounds and other recreation sites can be used only for recreation purposes. Permanent use or use as a principal residence without authorization is not allowed.
- In campgrounds, camp only in those places specifically marked or provided.
- At least one person must occupy a camping area during the first night after camping equipment has been set up, unless permission has otherwise been granted by the Forest Ranger.
- Do not leave camping equipment unattended for more than 24 hours without permission from the Forest Ranger. The Federal Government is not responsible for any loss or damage to personal property.
- Remove all personal property and trash when leaving.





## **Fee Areas**

- You must pay a fee to use certain developed sites and facilities. Such areas are clearly signed or posted as requiring a fee.
- Where fees are required, you must pay them before using the site, facility, equipment, or service furnished.

## **Public Behavior**

- No fighting or boisterous behavior.
- Keep noise at a reasonable level. Please be considerate of fellow visitors.

## **Pets and Animals**

- Pets must always be restrained or on a leash while in developed recreation sites.
- Pets (except guide dogs) are not allowed in swimming areas.
- Saddle or pack animals are allowed in recreation sites only where authorized by posted instructions.

## **Business Activities**

- Permits are required for any commercial activity.

## **Audio Devices**

- Operate any audio device, such as a radio or musical instrument, so that it does not disturb other visitors.
- A permit is required for operating a public address system in or near a campsite, developed recreation site, or over a body of water.



## **Fireworks and Firearms**

- Do not set off fireworks or other explosives within campgrounds and other recreation sites.
- Firing a gun is not allowed: a) in or within 150 yards of a residence, building, campsite, developed recreation site, or occupied area; b) across or on a road or body of water; c) in any circumstance whereby any person may be injured or property damaged.

## **National Forest Wilderness**

- Motor vehicles and motorized equipment are not allowed in wilderness areas.
- Preserve the wilderness—"Leave only footprints, take only pictures."



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